

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 IO-13 HA-05 AID-05 PC-01 /100 W
-----013583 301708Z /43

R 301440Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 069
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMCONSUL BUKAVU

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 5528

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, CG, AO
SUBJECT: POST SHABA GOVERNMENT ACTIONS IN SHABA

1. SUMMARY LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA HAVE REPORTED THAT DURING PRESIDENT MOBUTU'S PRESS CONFERENCE OF MAY 25 IN PARIS, HE SINGLED OUT LUNDA TRIBESMEN FOR COMPLICITY IN THE SHABA ATTACK, BANNED ALL HABITATION ALONG THE ZAIRIAN/ANGOLAN BORDER, AND REPLACED ZAIRIAN CIVILIAN IDENTIFICATION CARDS IN SHABA WITH LOCAL EMPLOYMENT CARDS. IN ANOTHER MOVE ANNOUNCED MAY 25, THE MILITARY GOVERNOR OF SHABA REPLACED ALL CIVILIAN SUB-REGIONAL COMMISSIONERS (COUTY EXECUTIVES) WITH MILITARY PERSONNEL. END SUMMARY.

2. IN AN INTERVIEW IN PARIS ON MAY 25, PRESIDENT MOBUTU TOUCHED UPON SEVERAL SUBJECTS IMPORTANT TO THE FUTURE OF SHABA PROVINCE. SIGNIFICANTLY, HE AGAIN SINGLED OUT THE LUNDA PEOPLE AS PARTICULARLY CULPABLE FOR MANY OF THE EVENTS IN SHABA. NOT ONLY HAS HE ACCUSED THEM OF PARTICIPATING IN THE ACTUAL INVASION, CONFIDENTIAL

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BUT HE HAS ALSO STATED THAT THEY AIDED AND CONTINUE TO AID THE EX-KATANGAN GENDARMES IN THEIR MIDST. THE CLEAR IMPLICATION OF HIS REMARKS IS THAT THE LUNDA ARE GUILTY OF TRADITIONALLY-DEFINED TREASON.

3. APPARENTLY IN AN ATTEMPT TO FORESTALL FUTURE INFILTRATION INTO ZAIRE, THE PRESIDENT DECLARED THAT A FREE-FIRE ZONE WOULD BE

ESTABLISHED IN A 60-MILE DEEP SWATH OF TERRITORY ALONG THE ZAIRIAN FRONTIER WITH ZAMBIA AND ANGOLA. (LOCAL PRESS REPORTS HAVE MENTIONED ONLY THE ANGOLAN BORDER AREA.) MOBUTU DESCRIBED THIS AREA AS A NO-MAN'S-LAND WHERE ZAIRIAN MILITARY AUTHORITIES WOULD BE ALLOWED TO SHOOT "ANYTHING THAT MOVES."

4. INVALIDATION OF ZAIRIAN CITIZENSHIP CARDS IN SHABA IN FAVOR OF EMPLOYMENT CARDS ALSO APPEARS AIMED AT STOPPING INFILTRATION FROM ANGOLA OR ZAMBIA. THE OFFICIAL EXPLANATION IS THAT LARGE NUMBERS OF ZAIRIAN ID DOCUMENTS WERE STOLEN DURING THE SHABA EVENTS AND MIGHT BE USED BY INFILTRATORS.

5. COMMENT: THE IMPOSITION OF MILITARY GOVERNMENT DOWN TO THE COUNTY LEVEL

WILL PROBABLY AUGMENT THE SHABAN'S SENSE OF ALIENATION FROM KINSHASA. IN PARTICULAR, THE PRESIDENT'S CONTINUED SINGLING OUT OF THE LUNDA ETHNIC GROUP HAS CAUSED INDIVIDUAL LUNDA TO FEEL INCREASINGLY PERSECUTED BY AND DIS-AFFECTED FROM THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. THE PROCLAMATION OF A FREE-FIRE ZONE WILL EXACERBATE LUNDA APPREHENSION; THE AREA IN QUESTION IS NEARLY ALL WITHIN LUNDA TERRITORY AND CONSEQUENTLY WILL REQUIRE MASS MOVEMENT (PROBABLY BY FORCE) OF LARGE SEGMENTS OF THE POPULATION. THEY WILL HAVE TO LEAVE THEIR TRADITIONAL HOMES AND FIELDS BEHIND WITH LITTLE HOPE, BASED UPON PAST ACTION, OF COMPENSATION FROM THE GOZ. PRESIDENT MOBUTU'S STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS, ALTHOUGH OSTEN-
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SIBLY DESIGNED TO COUNTER FISSIPAROUS TENDENCIES IN SHABA, APPEAR MORE LIKELY TO INCREASE THEM.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TREASON, SECURITY CONTROLS, LUNDA
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978KINSHA05528
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780226-0177
Format: TEL
From: KINSHASA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978058/aaaaagpb.tel
Line Count: 97
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 82982aa2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2753361
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POST SHABA GOVERNMENT ACTIONS IN SHABA
TAGS: PINS, CG, AO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/82982aa2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014